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ABSTRACT

A survey of 54 administrators attempted to determine their attitudes about a number of administrator competencies. Subjects were superintendents and principals in southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. They were asked to rate the importance of each competency, state whether it is acquired primarily before entry or on the job, and report the degree of assistance his or her own academic program had been in acquiring the competency. The principals rated all competencies listed as either important or very important. All but five (in the area of curriculum and instruction) were acquired primarily on the job. Principals reported that their academic program had been of some assistance in acquiring 91 percent of the competencies. Superintendents rated all competencies except one as either important or very important. Of the 62 superintendent competencies, 24 percent were acquired primarily before entry into the job. Superintendents reported that their academic programs had been of some assistance in acquiring most competencies. The academic program was reported to have been of no assistance for 20 percent of the competencies, most of which were in the area of political and intergovernmental relationships. (Author/JM)

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PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCIES

A Survey of School Principals and Superintendents

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Donald L. Walters
Editor

PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE COMPETENCIES

In order to assess its programs and to plan for the future, the Department of Educational Administration, Temple University, undertook an extensive study of administrative competencies. An important component of this study was a survey of practicing school administrators. This report presents the findings from the survey and a discussion of their implications for program planning.

Major Questions

A survey of practicing school administrators was conducted in order to obtain data pertinent to the following questions:

1. What importance do administrators assign to each administrative competency within a set of selected competencies?

2. Do administrators perceive that a given competency is acquired primarily before entry to an administrative position or is acquired primarily on the job?

3. To what degree do administrators believe that their own academic programs helped them to acquire a given competency?

The first question sought to elicit data for measuring the validity of each competency listed in the survey instrument. The perceptions of administrator incumbents were assumed to be critical indicators of whether each competency as stated was one which was important and relevant to successful administrative performance during the late 1970's. Competencies assigned high importance, therefore, would merit full consideration in the planning of training programs for school administrators.

The second question was designed to provide insight into whether a given competency was primarily acquired before or after job entry. Those competencies identified as primarily acquired before job entry would be appropriate to address in administrator preparation programs. Inservice or career development programs, on the other hand, would be suited to assist administrators to acquire competencies on the job.

The third question asked administrators to reflect on the relevance and utility of their own academic programs in assisting them to acquire a given competency. It was recognized that the respondents may have experienced different preparation programs as a function of when, where, and to what level they pursued their study. Nevertheless, the perceptions of the administrators may shed helpful light on the relative strengths and weaknesses of prior academic programs in meeting the needs of school administrators in the late 1970's.

Procedures

The survey populations were composed of superintendents and principals in public school districts in southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. Separate survey instruments were designed for each population. Superintendents were queried in regard to competencies for the superintendency, and principals were surveyed in regard to competencies for the principalship.

A sample of sixty-five principals was identified from the education directories of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. In similar fashion, a sample of thirty-five superintendents was selected.

These samples were selected to represent a cross-section of school districts but with a greater proportion in southeastern Pennsylvania, the primary Temple service area, than in southern New Jersey. Although possessing characteristics of systematic, random stratified samples, the selection process yielded non-probability samples.

The two survey instruments, one for principals and one for superintendents, contained lists of administrative competencies selected from a pool of competencies. In recent years literally thousands of competencies have been identified and published in the literature. For these instruments, samples of competencies were selected to represent specific administrative task areas. The task areas for the principalship were: (1) curriculum and instruction, (2) funds and facilities, (3) school-community relations, (4) pupil personnel services, and (5) professional and support personnel. For the superintendency the administrative task areas were: (1) curriculum and instruction, (2) personnel, (3) organizational management, (4) finance and business management, (5) facilities, (6) political and intergovernmental relationships, and (7) school-community relations. The instrument for the principals was reduced to thirty-nine competency statements, and that for the superintendents was limited to sixty-two statements.

The respondent reacted to each competency in three ways: (1) its importance, (2) the time at which it was primarily acquired, and (3) the value of his/her own academic program in acquiring that competency. Pre-determined alternatives were presented from which the respondent could select by checking the alternative best representing

his/her perception. No open-ended responses were required, although respondents were invited to make comments. All instruments were completed anonymously.

Data from the instruments were tabulated to produce frequency distributions for each competency statement. The modal response was selected to represent the group's position. In many instances the mode was a majority of the responses. Percentages were calculated when appropriate in order to indicate tendencies within the response patterns. Tables containing the frequency of response to each alternative for each competency are presented below. In all cases the data were treated descriptively.

Characteristics of the Respondents

The response rates were 54 percent (19 of 35) for superintendents and 54 percent (35 of 65) for principals. In light of these rates, generalizations drawn from the findings are best limited only to the respondents. Information about the characteristics of the respondents should be considered in interpreting and generalizing from the survey findings.

The Principals

Of the thirty-five respondents, six were not serving as school principals at the time of survey but were in other administrative positions. For all respondents, the years of service in their current positions ranged from one to twenty-one years; the median number of years was four. Thirty-three (94 percent) were employed in Pennsylvania; the remainder, in New Jersey.

Twelve (34 percent) of the respondents had earned doctorates. The master's degree was the highest degree earned by twenty-one (60 percent) persons; one person reported having earned an Ed.S. or CAGS degree. The year in which the highest degree had been earned ranged from 1954 to 1977; the median year was 1969. The year in which the principal's certificate was earned ranged from 1933 to 1976; the median was also 1969 — nine years prior to this survey.

The Superintendents

The respondents had been in their current administrative positions from one to seventeen years; the median number of years was six. Sixteen (84 percent) were employed in Pennsylvania; the remainder, in New Jersey.

Fourteen (74 percent) of the respondents had earned doctoral degrees. The year in which the highest degree (master's or doctorate) had been earned ranged from 1950 to 1977; the median year was 1971, a time seven years prior to the date of the survey. The year in which the superintendent's certificate (letter of eligibility) was earned ranged from 1949 to 1974; the median year was 1970.

Principal's Competencies

Major findings from the responses of the school principals are presented by competency areas. Summary statements were based on the modal responses; this number constituted a majority viewpoint in many cases. The responses to the individual statements are reported in Table 1.

Curriculum and Instruction

Four of the eleven competencies were rated "very important"; the remainder were rated "important." Of the four "very important" items, one ("understand theories of child development") was perceived to be acquired primarily for entry level to the principalship; four of the "important" competencies were perceived similarly. The majority (six) of the competencies were perceived to be acquired primarily on the job. In general, the principals reported that their academic programs had been of some assistance in helping them to acquire these eleven competencies.

Funds and Facilities

Three of the eight competencies pertaining to funds and facilities were rated "very important"; the remainder were rated "important." All of these competencies were perceived to be acquired primarily on the job; on the other hand, the principals reported that their academic programs had been of some assistance in helping them to acquire each of these eight competencies.

School-Community Relations

Two of the four items were rated "very important," and two were rated "important." All four competencies were perceived to be acquired primarily on the job, but their academic programs were deemed by the principals to have been of some assistance in helping them to acquire these competencies.

Pupil Personnel Services

In the area of pupil personnel services, four of the eight competencies were rated "very important"; four were rated "important." All eight of these competencies were perceived to be acquired primarily on the job.

The principals reported that their academic programs had been of great assistance in helping them to acquire the competencies to "understand due process" and to "develop student rules and regulations . . . ." In contrast, they reported their programs to have been of no assistance in acquiring the competency to "maintain effective discipline in the school."

Professional and Support Personnel

A majority (six of eight) of the personnel competencies were rated "very important"; the remainder were rated "important." All of these competencies were deemed to be acquired primarily on the job. In general, the principals reported that their academic programs had been of some assistance in helping to acquire these competencies. A nearly equal division (11-12-12) occurred on the value of the academic program for the competency to "apply selected scheduling techniques."

TABLE 1
PERCEPTIONS OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
AS REPORTED BY PRINCIPALS (N=35)

Competency	A* 1	A* 2	A* 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
I. Concerning CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, the principal should be able to:								
1. understand theories of child development.	2	14	<u>19</u>	<u>29</u>	6	2	<u>18</u>	15
2. assess existing curriculum for its relevance to students' needs.	1	9	<u>25</u>	6	<u>29</u>	4	<u>18</u>	13
3. plan, direct the implementation of, and evaluate program improvement.	11	<u>23</u>	1	<u>27</u>	3	3	<u>22</u>	9
4. interpret research findings pertinent to curriculum and instruction.	4	<u>23</u>	8	<u>18</u>	17	4	<u>21</u>	10
5. apply educational statistics for decision-making.	12	<u>19</u>	4	<u>19</u>	16	8	<u>21</u>	6
6. lead groups toward specific goals.	1	9	<u>25</u>	8	<u>27</u>	5	<u>19</u>	11
7. conduct long-range planning.	2	<u>18</u>	15	8	<u>27</u>	6	<u>23</u>	6
8. understand and apply various learning theories.	1	<u>23</u>	10	<u>26</u>	8	3	<u>20</u>	11
9. involve various publics in the continuous development of school philosophy.	3	<u>23</u>	9	4	<u>31</u>	6	<u>24</u>	5
10. interpret results of testing programs.	2	<u>20</u>	13	13	<u>22</u>	5	<u>19</u>	11
11. organize and conduct school evaluation.	3	13	<u>18</u>	7	<u>27</u>	7	<u>18</u>	9

*Note, the columns are interpreted as follows:

A - This competency is of (1) little importance, (2) important, or (3) very important.
B - This competency is acquired (1) primarily for entry level or (2) primarily on the job.
C - In acquiring this competency, my academic program was (1) of no assistance, (2) of some assistance, or (3) of great assistance

The modal responses are underscored.

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
II. Concerning FUNDS AND FACILITIES, the principal should be able to:								
1. monitor school accounting procedures.	2	16	17	9	26	7	18	10
2. generate an operating budget for his school.	1	11	23	8	27	6	19	10
3. evaluate programs in terms of cost-benefit.	2	22	11	8	26	9	22	4
4. develop program budgets for new courses.	2	22	10	6	28	10	19	5
5. manage current inventories.	5	20	10	4	30	10	22	3
6. manage funds and facilities within the legal framework.	3	12	19	8	26	10	16	8
7. obtain or adopt facilities for program needs.	4	17	14	3	32	11	13	11
8. coordinate support services, e.g. food service, transportation, with the instructional program.	8	23	4	1	33	13	19	1
III. Concerning SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS, the principal should be able to:								
1. organize and maintain effective two-way communication with the community.	0	8	27	9	26	5	19	11
2. utilize various techniques of public relations.	0	13	22	10	24	4	19	12
3. conduct periodic and continuing evaluation of the school-community relations program.	1	20	14	4	31	8	20	7
4. communicate with the various publics in the school community.	0	21	14	4	31	6	21	8

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
IV. Concerning PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICES, the principal should be able to:								
1. organize and maintain pupil accounting.	2	19	14	9	26	15	16	4
2. maintain effective discipline in the school.	0	4	31	4	31	15	9	11
3. understand current trends in counseling.	1	21	13	13	22	7	23	5
4. understand due process.	0	6	29	15	19	4	11	20
5. organize and supervise student personnel services.	0	26	9	6	29	6	22	7
6. develop student rules and regulations consistent with law and district policy.	0	8	27	6	29	4	14	17
7. establish a climate which will improve student morale.	0	3	32	6	29	11	14	10
8. utilize community agencies in conducting the student personnel program.	5	23	6	3	31	12	20	2
V. Concerning PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL, the principal should be able to:								
1. use various methods for the evaluation of teaching.	0	5	30	11	23	2	20	13
2. interview and evaluate the credentials of prospective employees.	1	7	27	11	24	8	17	10
3. utilize staff effectively to meet educational goals.	0	0	35	6	29	5	16	14
4. manage and monitor professional contracts applicable to his building.	2	19	14	5	30	12	16	7
5. create and operate staff development and supervisory programs.	0	11	24	5	30	7	17	11
6. apply selected scheduling techniques.	1	9	25	9	26	11	12	12
7. direct and evaluate non-certificated personnel.	5	18	11	7	27	12	15	7
8. develop and implement an effective program of orientation and induction of professional and support personnel.	0	14	21	7	28	8	14	13

Superintendent's Competencies

Highlights from the responses of the superintendents are presented by competency areas. Summary statements were based on the modal responses; this number constituted a majority viewpoint in many cases. The responses to the individual statements are reported in Table 2.

Curriculum and Instruction

Five of the seven listed competencies were rated "very important"; the two remaining ones were rated "important." Of the five "very important" competencies, four were perceived to be acquired primarily for entry level to the superintendency. All other competencies in this area were perceived to be acquired primarily on the job. In general, the superintendents reported that their academic programs had been of some assistance in helping them to acquire each of these seven competencies.

Personnel

Seven of the ten personnel competencies were rated "very important"; the remainder were each rated "important." Two of the "very important" competencies, one dealing with recruitment and one with evaluation, were perceived to be acquired primarily for entry level to the superintendency; the remaining eight competencies were seen to be acquired primarily on the job.

The superintendents rated their academic programs to have been of great assistance in their acquiring the competency to implement and supervise an effective program for the recruitment and selection of personnel. In contrast, their programs were rated to have been of

no assistance in regard to directing the role of management in the collective bargaining process. For the remaining competencies, their programs were deemed to have been of some assistance.

Organizational Management

Eight of the ten organizational management competencies were rated "very important"; the remainder were rated "important." Three competencies, one dealing with research, one with policy making, and one with problem-solving techniques, were identified as competencies acquired primarily for entry level. The majority of competencies in this area were seen to be acquired on the job.

Academic programs were rated to have been of great assistance in acquiring five of the ten competencies — all five of which had been rated to be "very important." The programs were deemed to have been of no assistance in acquiring the ability to identify evidence of organizational stress, one of the two competencies rated "important." For the three remaining competencies, academic programs were reported to have been of some assistance.

Finance and Business Management

The area of finance and business management contained sixteen competency statements, six more statements than the next highest area. Four of the sixteen competencies were rated "very important"; these statements dealt with understanding school law, administering budgets, locating funding sources, and developing a budget. Nine statements were rated "important," while the ratings for the remaining two items were divided evenly between "little importance" and "important." The

two latter items dealt with purchasing and food service operations.

Although some division of opinion occurred, the superintendents perceived that most (thirteen of the sixteen) of the finance and business management competencies are acquired primarily on the job. Similarly, academic programs were reported to have been of some assistance for a majority of these competencies.

Facilities

A majority (five of seven) of the competencies pertaining to facilities were rated "very important"; the remainder were rated "important." All but one of these competencies were deemed to be acquired primarily on the job. By the margin of one response, the item dealing with educational specifications was reported to have been acquired primarily for entry level. On this same item, the responses about the assistance of the academic programs were divided almost equally among the three alternatives; the response "of no assistance" received one more vote than either of the alternatives. In general, academic programs were reported to have been of some assistance in acquiring the competencies in the area of facilities.

Political and Inter-Governmental Relationships

Four of the seven competencies were rated "important"; the remainder were rated "very important." This area and the one on finance and business management were the only areas in which a majority of competencies were not rated "very important."

All seven competencies were reported overwhelmingly to have been acquired primarily on the job. For four competencies, the

academic programs were reported to have been of no assistance. The programs were deemed to have been of some assistance in acquiring the three remaining competencies.

School-Community Relations

The area of school-community relations included the smallest number of competencies in comparison to the other areas. All five competencies were rated "very important." Three were deemed to have been acquired primarily on the job; two, primarily for entry level.

Academic programs were reported to have been of some assistance in acquiring four of the competencies. The responses for the competency to identify the community power structure were widely divided, but a plurality was found to report that their programs had been of great assistance.

TABLE 2
PERCEPTIONS OF COMPETENCIES FOR THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENCY
AS REPORTED BY SUPERINTENDENTS (N=19)

Competency	A* 1	A* 2	A* 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
I. Concerning CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION, the superintendent should be able to:								
1. organize and conduct studies of the educational needs of both students and community.	1	5	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	6	3	<u>12</u>	4
2. involve the staff, board, students and the public in establishing and revising the instructional objectives of the school.	0	3	<u>16</u>	<u>10</u>	9	4	<u>10</u>	5
3. keep current the staff's knowledge of developments in curriculum and instruction as they are produced by the many agencies outside the local school system.	2	<u>10</u>	7	8	<u>11</u>	4	<u>11</u>	4
4. create and operate staff deve.opment and supervision programs.	1	2	<u>16</u>	<u>11</u>	8	2	<u>10</u>	7
5. provide the necessary support for maintaining and changing the curriculum.	0	5	<u>14</u>	7	<u>12</u>	3	<u>9</u>	7
6. establish evaluation procedures for the instructional program of the school district.	0	6	<u>13</u>	<u>12</u>	7	5	<u>11</u>	3
7. organize and direct the operation of curriculum committees.	0	<u>13</u>	6	7	<u>12</u>	5	<u>10</u>	4

*Note, the columns are interpreted as follows:

A - This competency is of (1) little importance, (2) important, or (3) very important.
B - This competency is acquired (1) primarily for entry level or (2) primarily on the job.
C - In acquiring this competency, my academic program was (1) of no assistance, (2) of some assistance, or (3) of great assistance.

The modal responses are underscored.

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3						
II. Concerning PERSONNEL, the superintendent should be able to:									
1. develop and implement personnel policies necessary to achieve the priorities and objectives of the school district.	0	6	13	7	12	1	11	7	
2. supervise the development and implementation of an effective program of orientation and continuing education for professional and non-professional staff.	0	12	7	7	12	2	13	4	
3. implement and supervise an effective program for recruitment and selection of personnel.	1	6	12	10	9	2	6	11	
4. organize and maintain personnel record systems.	2	12	5	6	13	7	11	1	
5. develop and use a continuous program for personnel evaluation.	0	3	16	10	9	5	7	7	
6. develop the role and responsibilities for specialized staff.	1	12	6	6	13	4	9	6	
7. motivate personnel to accomplish organizational goals.	0	8	11	8	11	5	8	6	
8. mediate effectively between conflicting forces.	0	5	14	5	14	3	10	6	
9. direct the role of management in the collective bargaining process.	1	2	16	3	16	9	4	6	
10. manage and monitor personnel contracts.	3	4	12	5	14	7	9	3	

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
III. Concerning ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT the superintendent should be able to:								
1. establish organizational roles necessary to implement programs and accomplish tasks.	1	4	14	9	10	4	7	8
2. recommend to the board the allocation of resources (human, physical, financial) on a priority basis in order to effectively and efficiently implement board policies toward established goals.	0	2	17	4	15	7	7	5
3. provide for and interpret research to assess organizational structure.	2	10	6	14	4	1	10	7
4. interpret board policies for faculty, staff, students, and the public.	0	5	14	5	14	5	6	8
5. create a climate and structure which provide for staff participation in goal-setting and decision-making.	2	5	12	9	10	3	9	7
6. assist the board in making policy by gathering data, analyzing data, and recommending alternatives.	0	5	14	10	9	0	8	11
7. identify evidence of organizational stress.	1	12	6	6	13	8	7	4
8. apply his knowledge of institutional behavior and individual behavior in implementing board policy.	0	9	10	5	14	2	10	7
9. understand and use problem-solving techniques.	0	6	13	14	5	1	4	14
10. recognize his strengths and weaknesses, and build a management team to complement his strengths and compensate for his weaknesses.	0	3	16	6	13	5	4	10

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
IV. Concerning FINANCE AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT the superintendent should be able to:								
1. understand school law and relevant legal opinions.	0	4	15	14	5	1	7	11
2. relate available statistical data and systems accounting approach to all areas of the school program.	1	13	5	10	9	8	7	4
3. understand all aspects of the pupil transportation system.	6	13	0	0	19	11	8	0
4. administer the development and execution of budgets in order to implement district plans and programs.	0	1	18	9	10	4	7	8
5. assess the economic environment of the school district in terms of local, state, and national economies.	1	9	9	4	15	3	10	6
6. locate all funding sources (local, state and national).	1	6	12	6	13	5	10	4
7. generate a budget which includes educational, revenue and expenditure plans.	0	3	16	6	13	1	9	9
8. evaluate educational programs on a cost-benefit basis.	0	12	7	4	15	7	8	4
9. supervise and coordinate the business and service programs of the district to ensure their support of the educational program.	1	12	6	7	12	2	13	4
10. supervise financial accounting.	6	11	2	9	10	6	11	2
11. supervise purchasing and supply management.	9	9	1	9	10	4	14	1
12. supervise plant operation and maintenance.	8	10	1	10	9	4	10	5
13. supervise insurance and risk management.	8	10	1	9	10	6	12	1
14. supervise food service operations.	9	9	1	8	11	8	10	1
15. understand state and federal audit procedures.	3	11	5	3	16	10	8	1
16. understand state and federal financial reporting requirements.	6	10	3	4	15	11	6	2

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
V. Concerning FACILITIES the superintendent should be able to:								
1. supervise the utilization of physical facilities for the maximum attainment of district goals.	1	11	7	3	16	4	11	4
2. conduct a needs assessment of school district facilities.	1	8	10	6	13	3	11	5
3. develop population projections and apply findings to future building plans of the district.	1	8	10	9	10	5	10	4
4. make educational specifications clear to architects so that buildings will satisfy the educational needs of the district.	1	6	12	10	9	7	6	6
5. establish a program to determine consensus of community values.	0	8	11	6	13	8	5	6
6. understand new technology and innovations concerning school plant planning and construction.	2	11	6	8	11	5	9	5
7. assess constructing, remodeling, and renovating needs of the district in order to satisfy the learning requirements of youngsters.	0	8	11	3	16	3	13	3

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
VI. Concerning POLITICAL AND INTER-GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS the superintendent should be able to:								
1. develop a political awareness for educational needs among community members.	0	5	14	3	16	9	4	6
2. develop lines of communication with politicians, including techniques for presenting the educational program and needs of the district.	0	8	11	2	17	10	7	2
3. gain knowledge of political personalities within the state, and the local district and provide for the efficient utilization of this information by his staff.	1	11	7	3	16	10	6	3
4. understand trends that relate to political issues and collective bargaining.	0	7	12	5	14	6	8	5
5. coordinate school programs with appropriate governmental agencies.	2	9	8	4	15	8	9	2
6. generate proposals for funding from various governmental sources.	0	12	7	4	15	11	7	1
7. develop a thorough background of information relating to the various governmental agencies.	2	13	4	4	15	6	12	1

Competency	A 1	A 2	A 3	B 1	B 2	C 1	C 2	C 3
VII. Concerning SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS the superintendent should be able to:								
1. develop effective procedures for the anticipation and recognition of crises and for effective crisis intervention.	0	2	17	9	10	4	9	6
2. identify the community power structure.	0	3	16	5	14	5	6	8
3. understand techniques for involving members of the community in school affairs.	0	5	14	10	9	1	10	8
4. establish effective communications at all appropriate levels through a regular system of informational services.	0	6	13	12	7	0	13	6
5. conduct periodic and continuing evaluation of the school and community relations program.	0	9	10	8	11	2	12	5

Summary

Separate questionnaires on administrative competencies were administered to school principals and to superintendents. Principals responded to a set of thirty-nine (39) competencies, and superintendents were presented a list of sixty-two (62) competencies. Each subject rated the importance (validity) of each competency, stated whether it is acquired primarily before entry or on the job, and reported the degree of assistance his or her own academic program had been in acquiring the competency.

Principalship Competencies

The competency statements were grouped in the following administrative task areas: (1) curriculum and instruction, (2) funds and facilities, (3) school-community relations, (4) pupil personnel services, and (5) professional and support personnel. Nineteen (49%) of the competencies were rated very important; the remainder were rated important. In the task areas of pupil personnel services and professional and support personnel half or more of the competencies were rated very important.

All but five competencies were deemed to be acquired primarily on the job. The five cited as being acquired primarily before entry were all in the task area of curriculum and instruction. In each task area most (based on plurality) principals reported that their own academic programs had been of some assistance in acquiring those competencies; of all thirty-nine competencies, 91 percent were rated thusly.

Superintendency Competencies

These competency statements were grouped in the following administrative task areas: (1) curriculum and instruction, (2) personnel, (3) organizational management, (4) finance and business management, (5) facilities, (6) political and inter-governmental relationships, and (7) school-community relations. Of the sixty-two competencies, 60 percent were rated very important; one competency was rated of little importance; the remainder were rated important. A majority of competencies in each task area was rated very important except for the tasks of (1) finance and business management and (2) political and inter-governmental relationships.

Fifteen (24%) competencies were deemed to be acquired primarily before entry into the superintendency. All task areas except political and inter-governmental relationships had one such competency; a majority of the competencies in curriculum and instruction were so rated. On the whole, superintendents reported that their academic programs had been of some assistance in acquiring these competencies; 62 percent of the competencies were assigned this rating. The academic program was reported to have been of no assistance for 20 percent of the competencies with a majority of the competencies in the area of political and inter-governmental relationships being so rated.

Considerations for Program Planning

Because of the limitations of the survey, care is cautioned in the interpretation of the findings. In this light, the following comments are offered for discussion and further consideration:

1. Competencies rated "important" or "very important" by administrative incumbents are considered to be valid administrative competencies. (Other referent groups, of course, may hold views which differ from the incumbents.) All but one competency selected for inclusion on the two survey instruments met this test; these lists, therefore, may be accepted as representative of the competencies needed by school administrators.

2. Competencies for different administrative levels, such as principal and superintendent, may be related but have varying degrees of emphasis according to level. All competencies, moreover, should not be treated as equal to one another; their emphasis in a training program should reflect the relative importance of each competency to the role in which it is to be applied.

3. In the survey instruments, the competencies were expressed in terms of practicing administrator roles. This style of wording may have produced the overwhelming tendency by the respondents to view these competencies as ones primarily acquired on the job. Competencies expected to be outcomes of a pre-service administrator training program, therefore, should be stated in terms appropriate to the student role rather than the practitioner role.

The task for persons planning and offering a pre-service training program is one of translating competencies stated in

practitioner terms into meaningful competencies which may be realistically acquired by persons in a pre-service, student role. The acquisition of these competencies should be predictive of future performance in an administrative role but, by their very nature, could not be expected to yield a highly significant, strong correlation with performance in a non-student role. Compounding the problem of predicting administrator performance is the practice of judging an administrator's performance in a specific administrative position, with all of its unique role expectations, rather than one's performance in general. Training programs designed for career development or to meet a specific institution's inservice needs would appear better able to address practitioner competencies directly than is possible in a pre-service training program such as one leading to administrative certification.

4. Although the competencies were stated in practitioner terms, nearly all school principals reported that their own academic programs had been of some or great assistance in acquiring those competencies. Superintendents, on the other hand, were less positive about the value of their programs. This finding may reflect the tendency for graduate training programs to place greater emphasis on the principalship than the superintendency. Graduate courses are typically composed of more students who have had no administrative experience and who are preparing for the principalship than persons who have had some administrative experience and who are preparing for the superintendency. Then again, the finding may indicate that the superintendent's role has experienced greater change from that addressed in the training program than has been true for the principal's role.